

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1014

Introduced by Assembly Member Thurmond

February 26, 2015

An act relating to pupils.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1014, as introduced, Thurmond. Pupils: truancy.

Existing law requires a pupil subject to compulsory full-time education or to compulsory continuation education who is absent from school without a valid excuse 3 full days in one school year or tardy or absent for more than a 30-minute period during the schoolday without a valid excuse on 3 occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof, to be classified as a truant. Existing law requires, upon a pupil's initial classification as a truant, a school district to notify the pupil's parent or guardian of specified information using the most cost-effective method possible.

This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would recognize and resolve the current school truancy crisis, help facilitate the return of chronically absent children to consistent and enduring school attendance, and recognize the importance of foundational education in the early years. The bill would also make various findings and declarations regarding truancy.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the of
2 the following:

3 (a) Only 17 percent of chronically absent kindergartners and
4 first graders in California read proficiently by grade 3 and pupils
5 who do not read proficiently by grade 3 are four times more likely
6 to drop out of school. Children who drop out of school cost the
7 state more than \$46 billion each year, including more than \$1
8 billion in juvenile crime costs alone.

9 (b) Ninety percent of elementary school pupils with severe
10 attendance problems, missing 36 or more days in the school year,
11 are estimated to be from low-income families.

12 (c) In the 2013–14 school year, 250,000 elementary school
13 pupils and 1 in 10 pupils from low-income families were
14 chronically absent, missing 10 percent or more of the school year.

15 (d) In the 2013–14 school year, African American elementary
16 school pupils were the highest subgroup, including homeless pupils,
17 to be truant and these pupils are chronically truant at four times
18 the rate of all other pupils.

19 (e) In the 2012–13 school year, one in five, or 744,085,
20 elementary school pupils were truant, an increase of 1.2 percent
21 from the 2011–12 school year.

22 (f) In the 2010–11 school year, California schools lost \$1.4
23 billion in average daily attendance funding due to pupil absences
24 and California school districts have lost over \$3.5 billion between
25 the 2010–11 and 2013–14 school years.

26 SEC. 2. It is the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation
27 that would do both of the following:

28 (a) Recognize and resolve the current school truancy crisis and
29 help facilitate the return of chronically absent children to consistent
30 and enduring school attendance.

31 (b) Recognize the importance of foundational education in the
32 early years by focusing on the chronically absent kindergarten and
33 grades 1 to 3, inclusive, aged children.